

OPEN AND SHUT?



Tuesday, January 17, 2012

Research Works Act: Cambridge University Press expands on its position

Last Friday I [wrote](#) about the Research Works Act (RWA) and included a quote from Cambridge University Press (CUP) about the bill, otherwise known as [HR 3699](#).

The quote was in response to three questions I had asked CUP about, respectively, the [National Institutes of Health Public Access Policy](#), the RWA, and the sponsorship of the RWA by the Association of American Publishers (AAP).

The RWA would have the effect of reversing the requirement (introduced by the NIH in 2005) that all research it funds is made freely accessible online. The bill would also prevent other US federal agencies from imposing similar requirements on researchers.

Last week CUP, which is a member of the AAP, provided the following statement in response to my questions, “We have submitted a formal response to the Office of Science and Technology (OSTP), but we want that response to have time to be processed by OSTP and it is too early for us to make any public statements.”

I also reported that Peter Murray-Rust, a [Reader in molecular informatics](#) at the [University of Cambridge](#) had written an open letter about the RWA to both [CUP](#) and [Oxford University Press](#).

Murray-Rust wrote: “The AAP has proposed a bill which effectively legislates the restriction of access to scholarly publication with the sole intention of raising the income of publishers. I and many others feel this is unethical, immoral and unworthy of any organisation committed to the dissemination of knowledge. Some commentators have described it as an act of war by the publishing industry on the scholarly community ... I hope that you can assure me CUP was not involved in creating the AAP’s position and ask you to consider the downsides of belonging to an organisation such as AAP.”



Peter Davison

Today I was copied into an email from CUP’s director of corporate affairs Peter Davison. The email expands on CUP’s position vis-à-vis the RWA, and reads:

“Cambridge University Press has submitted testimony to the United States Office of Science and Technology in response to the [Request for Information](#) (2011-28623) on subjects related to HR 3699. Our testimony is not identical to the position adopted by the Association of American Publishers. In particular, we write: ‘We

support all sustainable access models that ensure the permanence and integrity of the scholarly record... The Bill as proposed could undermine the underlying freedoms expected by and of scholarly authors...’

“You ask that we consider the ‘downsides of belonging to an organisation such as AAP’. Few members of industry associations will find themselves in complete agreement with every action of those associations, but the support of AAP for our and our authors’ interests continues to be highly valued by Cambridge University Press, both within the United States and further afield.”

Posted by Richard Poynder at 10:14



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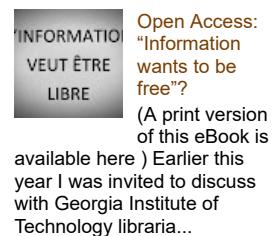
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